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The central fact that emerges from research on anti-Semitism is that prejudice performs a psychological function. To the intense bigot, prejudice is an emotional outlet essential for maintaining a sense of self-importance. Even to the moderate or mild anti-Semite, prejudice is a substitute for a true feeling of personal or group worth. There are many historical roots of anti-Semitism. Religious conflict between Jews and Christians has always been a cause of prejudice, but is certainly not the only factor to be considered. The economic stereotype of the Jew as a shrewd and tricky businessman has resulted in much biased criticism. Outside the economic area, in housing and social life, hostility to Jews is less widespread and seems to come from a different origin. Social restrictions which keep Jews out of country clubs, executive positions in large corporations, and many fraternities and sororities are usually maintained by people who are moved by contention and status-seeking rather than by deep-seated prejudice.

On the basis of opinion surveys, interviews, and other studies, two factors emerge which apparently correlate with less anti-Semitism in the great American middle-class--education and association. Because Jews in America are, in general, members of the middle-class, the Christian merchant, white-collar worker, and professional person tend to have the most frequent personal contact with Jews. People in these categories also tend to have more education.

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PREJUDICE AND MENTAL HEALTH

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ANTI-SEMITISM

SCIENCE LOOKS AT

Bennett O. Stalvey

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SCIENCE LOOKS AT ANTI-SEMITISM

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
Institute of Human Relations
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Office of Education-EEOP
Research and Materials Branch

Foreword

Prejudice and discrimination against minorities have long been recognized as evils, but only in our time has it been understood that they are no less hurtful to society at large than to their immediate victims. This is perhaps the most important of the insights gained by recent studies of the origins and effects of group prejudice.

The present booklet — developed from an earlier publication with the same title — interprets some of the findings of research as they apply to anti-Jewish prejudice in modern America. It is offered in the belief that informed thinking and discussion will help build a progressively more perfect democracy — a society in which all will freely share and to which all will fully contribute.

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What do we really mean when we talk of anti-Semitism? Who is the enemy we fight when we fight anti-Semitism? What can we learn from social science about the nature and causes of anti-Semitism?

In recent years, sociology and psychology have made great progress in examining anti-Semitism scientifically. The result is that a good deal more is known today than only 15 years

age. As the social scientists continue to perfect their instruments and carry on their research, we may expect to learn more about prejudice and discrimination in general, and about anti-Semitic prejudice and discrimination in particular.

In our everyday lives, we all understand the difference between feelings and actions. If my landlord refuses to do what he has promised in the lease, I can take him to court; if he simply dislikes me, I cannot — even though his dislike may trouble me more than his failure to make repairs.

Prejudice is a way of feeling and thinking, while discrimination (as well as its extreme form, persecution) is a way of acting.

At one time or another, virtually all religious and ethnic groups in this country have experienced discrimination in various forms. Among those who suffered most for several generations were the Irish Catholics. Italian and French Canadian immigrants and their descendants also have been treated as inferiors. Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans and Orientals still suffer.

Jews are one of the minority groups that encounter discrimination. They meet it in employment, vacation resorts, clubs and neighborhoods to live in. But when we say that the Jews are a disadvantaged minority, we do not mean that typically they are forced to live in slums and work for low wages; discrimination against them is much less severe than against some

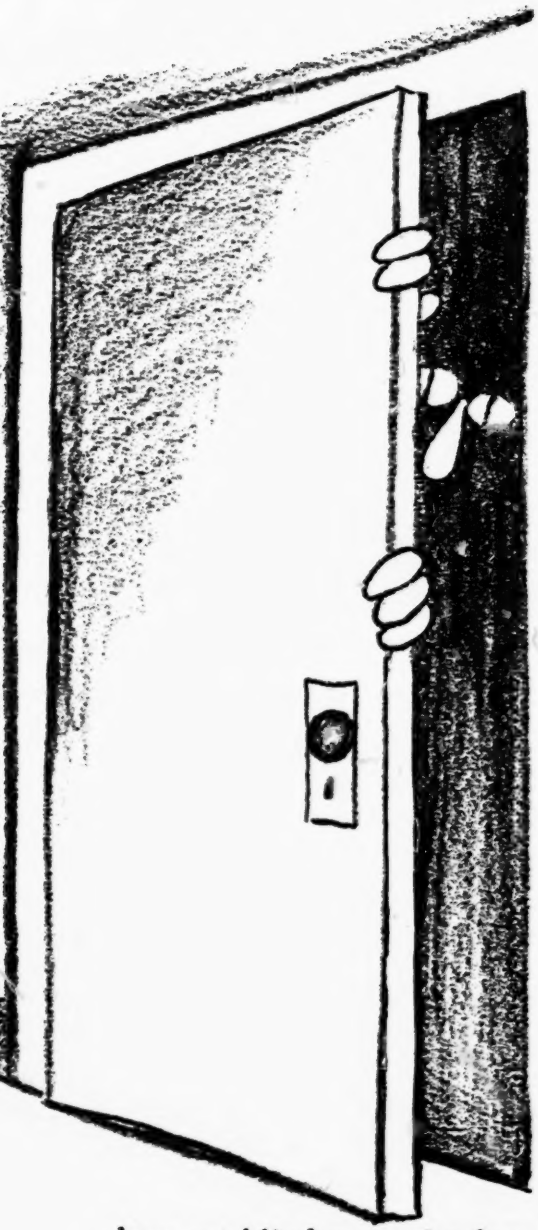
other groups. Although there are many underprivileged Jews in our country, the economic position of Jews on the whole does not compare unfavorably with that of other groups. More jobs are open to Jews today than 20 or 30 years ago. Fewer colleges and professional schools maintain quotas or discriminatory practices. Restrictions in housing, resorts and clubs also seem to be lessening.

Still, discrimination against Jews, only because they are Jews, remains real. It is a serious blemish on American democracy, and is therefore opposed by all who take democracy seriously.

Quite different from the problem of discrimination is the problem of prejudice. By prejudice we mean a hostile opinion that is based on ignorance or error and will not yield to facts, logic or experience. Thus, a belief that all Jews are loud is a prejudice. Many people retain it even after experience should have taught them that it is not true. Prejudice about Jews is common in America.

This pamphlet discusses research into the strange and persistent phenomenon of prejudice.

THE HIDDEN PURPOSES OF PREJUDICE



It is easy to understand why Jews, like other groups, are frequently thought of as having certain traits and characteristics. We tend to develop short cuts in thinking about the innumerable experiences of everyday life. We learn to generalize; it is usually more convenient to deal with classes of things and people than with individual objects or persons. Generalizing is useful, even indispensable, when it is reasonably accurate and does not blind us to the fact that there are differences as well as similarities among the things or people we are thinking about. When it is inaccurate or causes us to forget the differences, generalizing can lead us badly astray.

The term "Jew" includes more than 12 million human beings all over the world. Many have little in common with one another, yet all are distinguished from other human beings in that they are Jews, while other people, no matter how similar, are not. But the abstract concept "Jew," as used by many people, has little to do with the human reality; instead, it often represents objectionable, unpleasant or downright hateful characteristics. Why is this so? And why does it continue to be so even after those people have had a chance to know better?

The Psychological Use of the Scapegoat

It is normal and right to dislike what is harmful or dangerous. But sometimes we make a mistake. We fear or suspect some thing, person or group that is not really harmful. When we have experiences which ought to prove that our dislike was not justified, we change our attitude, provided it was rational in the first place. If we remain unaffected by fact or reality, that is because our hostility is not rational.

What makes some people hate irrationally? So far, the best answer is provided by the understanding which modern psychology can give us of human emotions. In essence, it is this: If we hate irrationally, it is because of some weakness in ourselves. We may not recognize this; indeed, we will probably do our best to keep ourselves from knowing it. We may be afraid, whether we admit it to ourselves or not, to reveal hatred of powerful, respected people: parents, a boss, the police. So we find substitutes who are weaker or less respected, whom it is safer to hate. Especially is this true when we have bottled up a great deal of resentment and hostility inside ourselves; then we are especially tempted to discharge it in the least dangerous way, on the least dangerous target. Suppressed hostility is one cause of irrational hate.

Another cause is dissatisfaction with ourselves — dissatisfaction about failures and disappointments in business or in love or in anything else that is important to us. These personal setbacks may be due to the fact that we ourselves are not as good or capable as we would like to think we are. But many people just cannot face their own shortcomings. Instead, they are likely to blame others, if it can be done without too much danger.

World conditions also make many people unhappy — the threat of war, economic depression or faulty national policies. But the forces behind world trends and events are hard to pin down. People who need the emotional satisfaction of finding someone to blame are quick to attack one group or another, even though that group is not responsible for their troubles.

Finally, we have impulses, deeply rooted in human instincts, whose unrestrained expression is strongly disapproved by society — impulses related to sex, aggressiveness, selfishness and the like. It is not wrong to have these impulses; we cannot help having them, because they are in our nature. The problem is not whether we have them, but whether we are able to control them to avoid hurting ourselves or our neighbors. Some people, however, cannot admit to themselves that they have such impulses or desires. Instead, they say, others have them, vile strangers have them.

The safe targets, the others, the strangers — these roles are often given to the Jews. Why? Why not redheads?

RELIGIOUS CONFLICT

We cannot understand anti-Semitism without understanding the special relation between the Jews and the major faith of western civilization, Christianity.

A man's religious feelings often include his deepest feelings about himself, his group, the world he lives in, the ancient riddles of life and death. Differences in religion, as we all know, can incite prejudice and persecution. Devastating wars have been waged in the name of particular religions, horrible persecutions have been unleashed to further belief in some special idea of God, and some sects have been utterly and finally wiped out.

As a minority religious group, the Jews have had their share of persecution. That they have survived at all is at least partly

due to the fact that for many centuries they have been so widely scattered that the blows have never fallen upon all of them at the same time.

In the world of antiquity entire communities were often put to the sword and the torch. Under the pagan Roman empire, Jews apparently were persecuted less severely than the early Christians. Islam, in general, also treated Jews less harshly than it did Christians, and the Ottoman Turks never fell upon the Jews as they did on the Armenians. Even in Christendom, Jews have been actually persecuted, for the most part, only during periods of general persecution. Nevertheless it cannot be denied that, among Christians especially, there has been a traditional set of ugly ideas about Jews.

The overwhelmingly important historical fact is that Christianity started as a sect of Judaism. Any true Christian, therefore, must consider himself a child of Judaism. In this sense the ancient antagonism of Christian and Jew resembles a family fight, with the periodic flareups of bitterness and blind hatred that prolonged family dissension can generate.

The Jews — among whom Jesus was born, to whom he came with his message, and who refused to accept him either as messiah or as prophet — have always been a problem for Christianity. At times it has sought peacefully to convert them; at times it has massacred them. At times it has honored them; at times it has represented them as the devil incarnate.

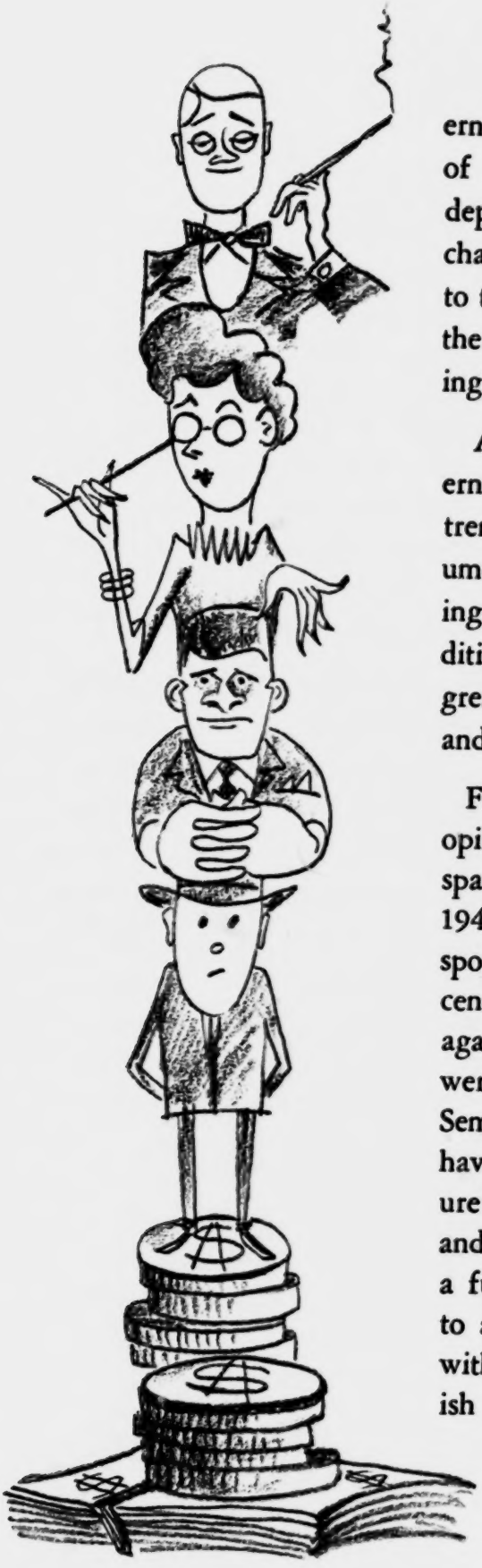
Many students think that other ancient psychological causes of anti-Semitism may be discerned. For instance, some argue that the pagans never were really happy about giving up their free and easy old religion and morality to come under the yoke of Judeo-Christian restraint; it was easier for them to vent their dissatisfaction on Judaism and the Jews than on Christianity.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CAUSES OF ANTI-SEMITISM

Clearly, the two factors we have considered — irrational hatreds and age-old religious conflicts — are not the whole story. True, some people are always susceptible to irrational hatred; and the influence of religion in Western civilization is strong. Yet, can psychology and the history of religion together explain why anti-Semitism persists and has been capable in our day of touching off one of the greatest disasters in history? Something else must be amiss, something peculiar to the modern world.

The special economic pursuits of Jews in modern societies offer some clues. A sequence of historical circumstances, arising out of the religious discrimination against Jews by Christians in the Middle Ages, led Jews to become specialized in certain vocations. At various times and in various places they were forbidden to own land, to farm, to belong to guilds, to hold public office. Their only recourse was to settle in town and city, where they became merchants — impoverished in Eastern Europe, relatively prosperous in Western Europe and America. Many, though classed as "merchants," were really artisans or peddlers, and many continued to work for wages. The merchant throughout history has been envied by the poor, exploited by the powerful, and scorned by the intellectuals; and the Jewish merchant has been no exception.

At a later stage of modern development, many Jews became professional men — doctors and lawyers — and some of their colleagues did not welcome the added competition. As the mod-



ern economy developed, cycles of alternating prosperity and depression set in. The merchants were increasingly subject to the hostility of other classes; the professions became increasingly crowded.

Anti-Semitic feeling in modern America has reflected these trends. It has fluctuated in volume and articulateness, depending on social and economic conditions. Throughout it has been greatly concerned with dollars and cents.

Findings of a national public-opinion survey over a 13-year span illustrate this point. In 1946, 64 per cent of the respondents reported they had recently heard criticism or talk against the Jews (or possibly were expressing their own anti-Semitic feelings in claiming to have heard it); by 1950 the figure had dropped to 24 per cent and by 1959 to 12 per cent. But a full 30 per cent were found to agree more or less strongly with this perennial slur: "Jewish businessmen are so shrewd

and tricky that other people don't have a fair chance in competition." Year after year, preoccupation with the economic issue has been revealed in comments relating to the presumed wealth of Jews, their supposed power in finance and their alleged underhandedness in business. Yet the equation "Jew = moneyman" is obviously false in today's broadly shared economy, in which nearly everyone is to some extent a moneyman.

The persistence of these anti-Semitic expressions in the face of facts suggests that something deeper than simple economic frustration lies at its roots. The caricature of the "greedy Jew" has haunted Western culture for centuries — witness such familiar figures as Shylock or Fagin and their descendants in contemporary literature.

Social Anti-Semitism

Outside the economic area, as in housing and social life, hostility to Jews is less widespread and seems to have a different origin. In the 1959 survey, in which 30 per cent of the respondents agreed on the supposed craftiness of Jewish businessmen, only 11 per cent accepted this piece of bigotry: "The trouble with letting Jews into a nice neighborhood is that sooner or later they spoil it for other people."

Present-day prejudice and discrimination in social life and housing seem to be connected with recent changes in the structure of society. The old, closely knit family and community life, which gave people security and happiness, is disappearing. It is replaced, for more Americans each year, by a highly fluid middle-class society which lacks permanent roots and suffers from a kind of built-in competitiveness. Many seek modern substitutes for the closely knit community of former days. The result is often a heightening of what the social scientists call in-group feeling, exaltation of "us" over "them" and exclusion of lesser breeds.

In-group feeling often keeps the Jew out where his non-Jewish equal is accepted: out of city and country clubs, out of the "executive suite" of certain large corporations and, until recently, out of many fraternities and sororities. In-group feeling also is the cause of the Gentile exodus that sometimes occurs when Jews begin to move to a desirable suburb.

Many who help maintain these or similar social restrictions are not moved by malice or deep-seated prejudice, but rather by convention and "status seeking." They uncritically accept, together with other conventional superstitions, the notions that a Jew, simply because he is a Jew, is inferior to his opposite number among Gentiles, and that to guard one's status one must keep aloof from any group of supposedly lower prestige.

Thus a Gentile excessively concerned with status will avoid all but the most superficial contact with Jews, even those who are his economic, intellectual and cultural equals — and sometimes superiors — for fear of violating the conventions of his own social set. An extreme example is the screening device used in Grosse Pointe, Michigan, where brokers required prospective Jewish property owners to score 85 points on a "social acceptance" test, compared with 50 points required of majority-group applicants. After exposure to public opinion, this undemocratic practice was abandoned.

Once established, the pattern of social avoidance and exclusion is self-perpetuating. And although the status seeker does not mean to undermine someone else's position but merely to strengthen his own, the effect of his behavior is deeply divisive. Without close contact between Jew and Gentile, it is hard to get rid of old stereotypes and develop healthy intergroup attitudes. Unwittingly, the status seeker may open the door for the bigot.

M

Opinion surveys are used to measure the relation between anti-Semitic utterances and such factors as education, economic status and age. For many years the findings have shown, by and large, that more old people than young ones and more women than men voice hostility to Jews. They also have shown that the more education people have and, up to a certain point, the more money they make, the less they express anti-Semitism.

When we examine these correlations, education appears to be the common factor. Poorer people, older people and women frequently are less educated than richer people, younger people and men. But why this is so, why prejudice in our society apparently decreases as education increases, is not clear. This correlation has not always and everywhere held true. Thus, in the Germany of the Kaisers (1871-1918), according to most observers, the more educated elements were the more anti-Semitic.

One possible explanation is that the more education Americans have, the more contact they have with the American creed, which cannot be reconciled with racial or religious discrimination. Does this mean that education has little or no effect on anti-Semitic feelings, but merely teaches people that it is improper to express them? Perhaps; but it is not easy to believe that large numbers of people will go on saying one thing and believing another for long. In the American environment, education may have deeper effects than some of us may think. Besides making people more cautious about speak-

ing their minds to strangers with questionnaires, it conceivably does change some people's views about Jews.

It is probable that education reduces prejudice not, or not only, by the simple process of correcting misconceptions with facts, but also in more personal ways. The emotional benefits, such as increased self-confidence, which many people derive from education may have as much effect as factual learning. For that matter, as a recent study points out, perhaps it is not education itself that accounts for the absence of prejudice, but some other characteristic or combination of characteristics common among people who prize education. They may be more intelligent or more liberal-minded than others in the first place, or they may have come from backgrounds that predisposed them toward open-mindedness — such as families interested in public affairs, or communities in which personal contact with Jews was frequent.

Personal contact does seem to make a difference, according to the surveys. The interviewers asked people whether they had any kind of association with Jews, such as working together, mingling socially or living in the same neighborhood. Those with some such association seemed less anti-Semitic than those without it. Childhood friendships in particular seemed important. Respondents who recalled having Jewish friends when they were young were much less likely to express anti-Semitic sentiments than those who remembered no Jewish playmates.

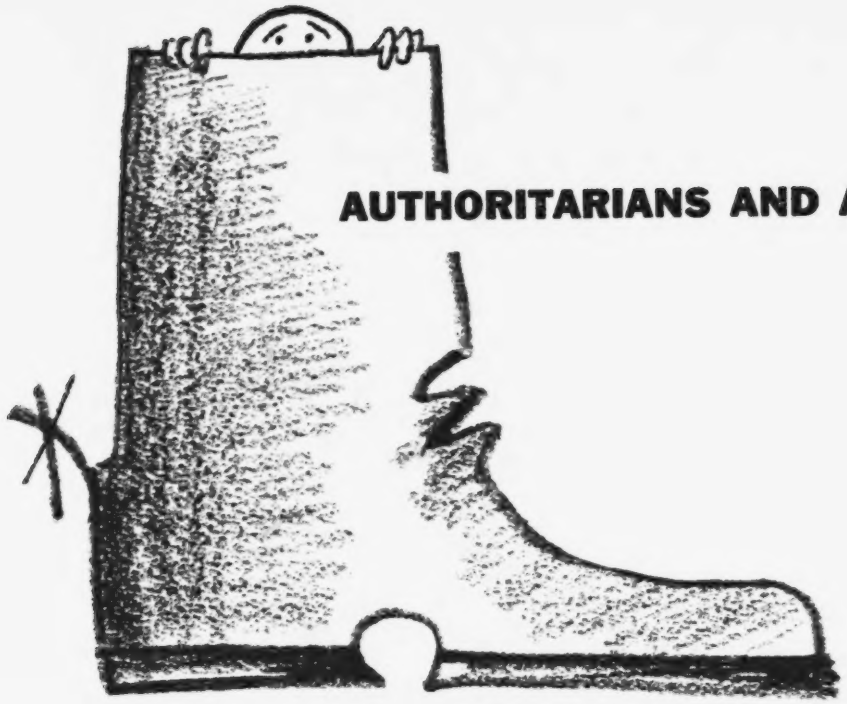
Here again, both "optimistic" and "pessimistic" conclusions can be drawn. We may conclude that people who have contact with Jews discover that they are "human," and thus change their prejudiced views. Acting on this theory, we will naturally place great emphasis on doing away with residential segregation between Jews and Christians, whether imposed by deeds

and covenants or created voluntarily by individual action. Residential segregation not only prevents Jews and Christians from coming to know each other as neighbors, but also can mean segregation of children into public schools predominantly Jewish or Christian in their composition.

On the other hand, we might conclude that it is not association with Jews that reduces prejudice, but rather the absence of prejudice that induces association. There is some warrant for believing that people who welcome Jewish friends had no strong feelings of anti-Semitism to begin with, and that these unprejudiced people more easily remember their social relationships with Jews.

To sum up, perhaps the answer is somewhat as follows: Jews in this country are, in general, members of the middle class. Thus, the Christian merchant, white-collar worker and professional person tend to have the most frequent personal contact with Jews. People in those categories also tend to have more education.

On the basis of these studies, then, we see two factors which apparently go with less anti-Semitism in the great middle class: education and association. Which of these two is the more important we cannot yet say. The studies also suggest that economic security is a third major factor. Further research will undoubtedly give us more information.



AUTHORITARIANS AND AGITATORS

We now turn to a perplexing question: Why do some of us like to use scapegoats for fake solutions of our problems?

The extreme anti-Semite, it now appears, is likely to be something more: he is likely to be "authoritarian," to use the label of social scientists. The typical authoritarian is not only anti-Semitic, he is also anti-Negro, anti-foreign, anti-democratic.

How have we come to discover that an "authoritarian personality" exists? And what is its essential character?

A series of scientific studies gives us some answers to these questions.* The major study in the series is *The Authoritarian Personality,* by Theodor W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik,

*"Studies in Prejudice," in five volumes (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949-50), sponsored by the American Jewish Committee. A popularly written synthesis of salient points of the "Studies" is *The Fears Men Live By,* by Selma G. Hirsh (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955).

Daniel J. Levinson and R. Nevitt Sanford. In the course of research for this book, more than 1,500 persons filled out lengthy questionnaires; many were intensively interviewed and tested. Among them were college students, factory and office workers, veterans, members of parent-teacher associations, social workers, prison inmates, officer candidates in a maritime training school, members of Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, patients undergoing psychiatric treatment, and members of various church groups.

It was discovered that people who gave anti-Semitic answers to one set of questions were likely to give answers of a special sort to a different set dealing with politics, and to still other questions dealing with such apparently remote subjects as how to raise children. Those who had shown anti-Semitic feeling tended to insist on more severe discipline for children than those who did not show anti-Semitic feeling. The researchers concluded that these differences in attitude reflected important differences in basic personality.

Meanwhile, the social scientists working on other parts of the "Studies in Prejudice" were probing for clues to the nature and origins of anti-Semitism among certain selected groups. One group consisted of persons undergoing psychoanalysis (see *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder,* by Nathan W. Ackerman and Marie Jahoda); another consisted of recently discharged veterans of World War II (see *Dynamics of Prejudice,* by Bruno Bettelheim and Morris Janowitz). These specialized studies yielded a wealth of material.

The following picture of the authoritarian person emerged. He is a strict conformist, adhering rigidly to the accepted conventions and submitting willingly to authority. He demands that others conform too. He neither improvises nor experi-

ments, but tends to do things according to unchanging custom. For him there is only one way of doing and thinking, and all others are taboo.

The authoritarian person draws a sharp distinction between two groups of people — his "own kind" and others — and considers it imperative to protect his group from contamination by outsiders, whom he regards as degenerate and ever-threatening. He is capable of declaring himself a 100-per cent American while making the most undemocratic proposals. He sees himself as pure and without any taint of immorality. At the same time he is very agitated about the immorality of others, which he believes to be more widespread than is commonly thought. He cannot assume responsibility for his own failures; anything unpleasant that happens to him must be someone else's fault.

What made the authoritarian what he is? His personality — like every other — is formed primarily by family relations in early childhood, though it may be strongly influenced at a later stage by teachers or other close associates, or by deep experiences such as the intense and emotionally charged impact of wartime service.

The authoritarian person's childhood — as he recalls it, for there is no easy way of getting other information about it — tended to have little of love or affection. The father was usually the dominant parent, and he was a strict disciplinarian. In a significant number of cases, the family was broken by divorce. The parents were intensely concerned about status, about being accepted as members of the "right" group. They may have provided him with his physical needs, but they demanded absolute submission. Rather than turn against them, the authoritarian person at some point unconsciously made the decision to accept them, for they were powerful — and he then turned his resentment against the "other," the outsider — such as the Jew.

The authoritarian seems to be easily manipulated by the agitator (see *Prophets of Deceit,* by Leo Lowenthal and Norbert Guterman). We do not know whether the typical agitator is himself as fear-driven as the typical authoritarian, or whether he is a calculating racketeer preying on such people. Probably he is a mixture of both, for racketeering itself demands something of the same combination of drives that we find motivating the authoritarian individual: the same slavish regard for power, the same contempt for the outsider and the weakling. In addition, the typical agitator is a shrewd manipulator of mass emotions. He knows the most effective way to work on his audience.

Analysis of the agitator's "message" shows that he plays upon obscure fears and insecurities, unsatisfied and repressed desires, vague yearnings for self-assurance, pervasive needs for targets to vent aggression on. These fears and needs, as we have seen, are basic to the authoritarian personality.

The agitator poses as a man to whom all is known, who can verify out of personal knowledge what those who listen to him only feel dimly. He offers no concrete evidence, no documentation. His followers need none. The leader tells them what he has heard and seen, and the darkest visions of the followers are confirmed. The agitator depicts himself as one of them, a victim of vaguely identified forces, yet strong enough — if they will but unite and follow him — to destroy the enemy. Reveling in the fantasy, the followers joyfully dream of the revenge they will take on those whom they consider the true source of their misfortunes.

It would be possible to regard the agitator as a quack and his performance as a modern bloodless substitute for the Roman circus, were it not for the evidence of recent European history that anti-Semitic incitements can pass with an all too horrible facility into mass murder.

America has her share of hatemongers — such as Conde McGinley, Gerald L. K. Smith, Frederick John Kasper and Hitler's imitator, George Lincoln Rockwell. But it is a far cry from Hitler Germany, which adopted anti-Semitism as a national policy, to the United States, where the hatemonger's following is small and disreputable, and where his indirect influence reaches only a confused minority of citizens who lack a firm commitment to democracy. Is this because American agitators have used the wrong tactics? Or is it rather because most Americans refuse to respond to the agitator's message, no matter how expertly put?

During the 1930's, racist demagogues were able to capture "lunatic-fringe" followings mainly for two reasons. First, during the long depression, the most discontented elements of the population were searching for scapegoats who could be blamed for economic hardship. Second, Hitler was creating a network of subversive movements, many financed from Germany, to spread his racist doctrines in the United States.

In the 1940's, with America's entry into World War II, racial and religious hatemongering was recognized as a threat to the nation's unity and security. Awakened and alarmed, Americans closed ranks. Through investigation by government, exposure by press and radio, and forthright action by religious, civic, educational and other organizations, the bigots were driven underground or out of business.

Early in the 1950's, some of the old-time anti-Semites came back into the open, using the cold war and the nation's concern over world communism as an excuse for parading their old hatreds. Since 1954, when the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed

public school segregation, bigots have enjoyed their greatest successes in the South, where the exploitation of race tensions resulted in several synagogue-bombings during 1957 and 1958.

Many of the agitators of the 1950's, like others before them, were strongly interested in running a profitable racket. We do not know how many professional bigots have been drawn to the field by the prospect of ample contributions and other income. We do know that the rewards sometimes are substantial.

Early in 1960, following incidents abroad, a rash of swastikas suddenly disfigured walls in many parts of the country. The swastika daubers — teen-age boys and a few young men —

seem to have been unorganized, except for a few who had formed secret Nazi-minded groups with storm-trooper trappings. At first glance, most of the perpetrators did not appear grossly maladjusted; few had delinquency records. It was not immediately clear what had caused them to act as they did. Was it personal hostility against Jews, prejudices learned from adults, absorption of actual Nazi ideology, twisted notions of religion, or perhaps a general rebellion against society, which they expressed by a symbol of maximum shock value and directed against a target that seemed safe? The youths were appallingly ignorant of the true nature of nazism and of the misery it had brought to mankind.

Whatever the motivation, any overt act of bigotry is a danger signal calling for scrutiny, understanding and corrective action. Therefore, a scientific study under the direction of the social-work research center of a leading university is now in progress. The family backgrounds, personal histories and personalities of the boys apprehended are being examined in an effort to find out what triggered their behavior. It is hoped that the study will extend present-day knowledge of some of the influences that make for demonstrations of prejudice.

Anti-Semitism As A Political Weapon

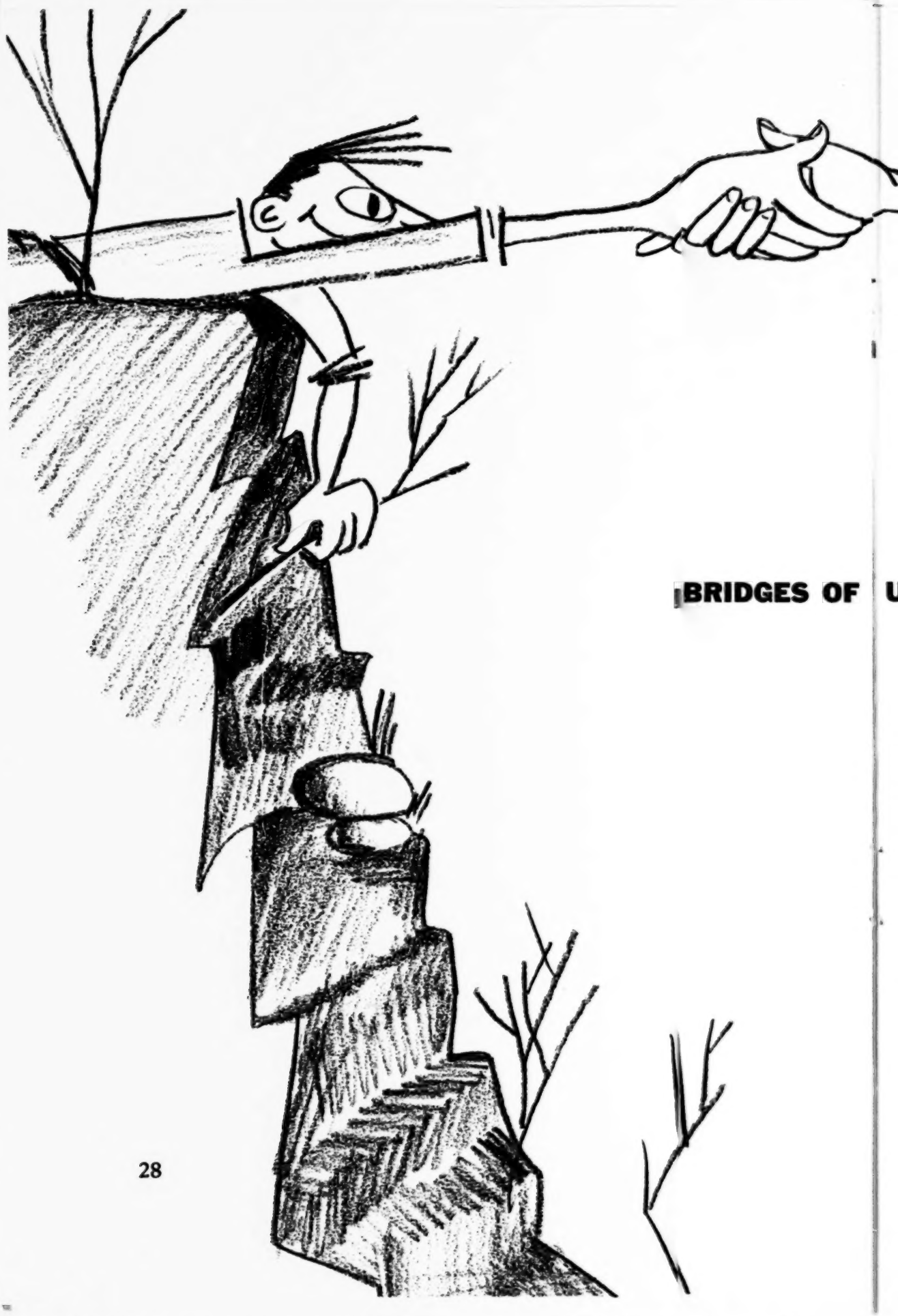
There is no anti-Semitic political party in the United States, except for isolated minuscule groups calling themselves parties. No party openly espousing anti-Semitism could long survive the storm of denunciation which would burst about its head. This is not to say that subtle — or sometimes quite flagrant — appeals to prejudice are unknown in our political contests. Nor can it be denied that there is always the possibility of a coalition or a loose alliance between various anti-Semitic groups and certain larger special-interest groups whose immediate

objectives may happen to coincide. The point is, rather, that anti-Semitism is a despised weapon in the political arsenal. It is employed only by irresponsible elements not subject to direct control or effective discipline by the high commands of the major parties. Anti-Semitic statements are surreptitiously made and officially disclaimed; invariably they are publicly condemned by responsible people.

In other countries, however, anti-Semitism has a grim political history. The most notorious example is Germany, where open anti-Jewish appeals became a common political device soon after the founding of the German empire in 1871 (see *Rehearsal for Destruction,* by Paul W. Massing). The slander of the Jew as parasite, destroyer, subversive conspirator and enemy of the state was reinforced in each generation. In a period of extreme economic stress, Hitler appeared — a demagogue of perhaps unparalleled talents.

In spreading his gospel of hate, Hitler was helped by the Germans' excessive regard for authority. As we have seen, authoritarians usually come from father-dominated homes in which rigid standards of discipline are enforced. Such a home environment was common in Germany. Indeed, the whole fabric of German life was tightly stratified and disciplined.

The typical American home stands in sharp contrast. Relations between parents and children are likely to rest much more on give-and-take than on firm discipline and meek submission. The mother is the dominant parent more often than the father. Father is not always right and may even admit it when cornered in discussion with his outspoken offspring. Americans, young and old alike, take authority lightly, are less than reverent toward public officials, agree that "rules are made to be broken," and admire nothing more than novelty. The contrast with Germany is striking.



BRIDGES OF U

NDERSTANDING

The central fact that emerges from the research sketched all too briefly in these pages is that prejudice performs a psychological function. To the intense bigot it is an emotional outlet apparently essential for maintaining a sense of self-importance. Even to the moderate or mild anti-Semite, it is a substitute for a true feeling of personal or group worth and an attempt to achieve identification with "superior" people. That is why prejudice is largely unaffected by the objective evidence of experience and highly resistant to rational argument.

These findings necessarily imply that some people will resist learning the truth about their anti-Semitism; they need it too much. But a human being is influenced by many different things — including rules of conduct, ideas, slogans, principles and moral standards — all of which may not add up to a consistent pattern in his life. In one environment he may entertain and express the most negative thoughts about Jews, yet in obedience to other social pressures he may behave toward them with the most scrupulous regard for the precepts of democracy. If he is anti-Semitic merely out of conformism, it may be possible to make him see the contradictions between his behavior and his ideals. True, studies have shown that some people purposely, though unconsciously, misinterpret what is said to them in order to preserve their behavior and beliefs unchanged; yet it seems likely that emphasis on the contrast between ideals and behavior can be very useful, at least with those people who do not need their prejudices quite so desperately.

There is another useful approach: to change the environment in which the anti-Semite lives. In communities where fair employment practices are enforced by law, where colleges and professional schools eliminate religious bias in admitting students, where neighborhoods cannot be restricted to "Gentiles only," new habits and customs are shaped. Where formerly the most flagrant discrimination against minorities used to be considered normal and right, democratic practices in time become the accepted norm. And if the anti-Semitic person is authoritarian, it will be all the easier for him to accept the new situation, provided that recognized community authority stands strongly behind it.

Thus, there is hope for positive results from legislative and educational anti-discrimination programs.

Meeting Prejudice Realistically

One of the chief lessons to be learned from the scientific study of prejudice is that the cause of anti-Semitism lies not in the Jews — their behavior, character, customs or religion — but in the mind, the attitudes of the anti-Semite.

To Jews in particular, this insight is valuable; without it some may find themselves meeting the anti-Semite's vicious and silly generalizations ("all Jews are clannish") with equally silly ones ("all Gentiles are prejudiced"). Or, more seriously, they may be lured into the trap of believing or half-believing anti-Semitic slurs.

A Jew who falls into this trap may come to see his fellow Jews—sometimes even himself—through the eyes of the enemy. In an extreme case he may develop an attitude of hatred indistinguishable from that of the non-Jewish anti-Semite. This puzzling and undignified attitude, "self-hatred," is found to some degree in many minority groups. Recent studies suggest that the persons most susceptible to it are those who have lost touch with their religious or cultural heritage and lack emotional ties with their group.

Thus, only when a Jew accepts himself as a Jew can he live a mature, useful life in mutual respect with his fellow citizens and, if necessary, defend himself, either alone or with others, against bigotry. Feelings of isolation and helplessness in the face of hostility may lead him to embrace specious theories and rationalizations — for example, that Jews bring their troubles upon themselves by unsocial or unusual behavior; that they must prove themselves "better" than Gentiles to escape prejudice; or that they should make themselves inconspicuous to avoid trouble. Only objective, well-informed thinking, free from misconceptions, can yield answers that make sense.

One may wring some wry humor out of speculating upon the probable state of feeling between Jews and Christians today if Christianity had remained a minority religion and Judaism had prevailed throughout the Western World. What image of the Christian would have been formed in the Jewish mind over those centuries? What would be the prevailing attitude toward the Christian minority today?

This "iffy" question is asked only to suggest that until we have developed entirely effective methods of wiping out anti-Semitism, the best promise for a civilized and progressively happier living-together of Jews and Christians lies in the ordinary human effort to cultivate understanding and acceptance.

The America of our aspirations was foreshadowed in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The fruition of those aspirations comes ever closer, as we develop a body of law and of practice that makes the concept of democracy live. It is in the movement toward greater security of the individual, increased freedom of conscience, better education, broader equality of opportunity for all men, deeper respect for the integrity of every human being, that the promise lies for an end to discrimination and — perhaps — ultimately to prejudice.

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